

## **Regular Town Council Meeting February 14, 2022**

A regular session of the Sheridan Town Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Robert Stump, Council members Mike Walter, Rahn Abbott, Z. Wade Hampton and Tammy Todd were present along with Clerk, Ginger Galiger.

Guests: Mike Dietrich, Eileen Pearce, Kaylie Theis, Jeff Gerth, Phil Fortner, Jaclyn Wolf Taylor, Gary & Dorie Hilliker, Ed Smathers

### **Pledge**

#### **Public Comment Not on the Agenda**

Mayor Stump began by reading an email sent from Patricia Wang the owner of the Candlelight Café. They have recently lost an employee due to them not being able to find housing. Patricia is concerned that even if Sheridan gets housing developments, will there be housing affordable for young people to buy or rent. I attached the email at the end of the minutes.

Dorie Hilliker spoke next regarding her concern for growth in the Town of Sheridan. In last week's Madisonian, the Madison Conservation District submitted an article on drought along with another article that talked about the snowpack. Water is a precious resource. "Do we want to risk drought in order to grow the town now?" In the past meeting minutes, water and wastewater conservation has come up many times. The towns Growth Policy describes a brief description of these issues. Dorie asked, "Is our engineering firm bonded?" Mayor Stump replied, "yes." The Council is now talking about drilling another well at the cost of \$350,000. Dorie said, "the town people should be considered before this chaotic growth".

Gary Hilliker received a letter from C. Mauseth that he read aloud. The letter is attached at the end of the minutes. Mayor Stump will respond to her questions via mail within 2 weeks.

Dorie then asked about the "3<sup>rd</sup> review" regarding the sewer study and who was going to pay for it. Mike Walter spoke on the "peer review" being done and paid for by WWC.

Jaclyn Wolf Taylor introduced herself as a new resident of the town and how excited she is to be here. Growth and development are coming, and we need to be mindful of the Community.

"A formal proposal has not been submitted to the planning board yet. If the subdivision meets all the requirements, the County can make a recommendation to the Council to approve the subdivision," stated Mayor Stump. Housing is a huge issue in the town.

Ed Smathers' stated, "young people cannot afford to live here". A one-acre lot is \$50,000.

"Prices have skyrocketed everywhere, and we don't know what the housing market is going to do," added Dorie Hilliker.

#### **Department Reports**

**Sheriff** – Phil Fortner briefly reported on the 32 calls received in January 2022. Sheridan has received a lot more activity than Twin Bridges.

**Library** – The book sale started today and will continue until February 19<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 to 5:00.

**Attorney** – Attorney Kruer will be completing an MOU for shared equipment that is owned by the fire department.

**Fire Department** – Mike Dietrich reported having zero calls in January. Will try to burn at the dump on February 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Public Works** – Duke Gilman was absent. Mayor Stump reported that Duke has been working on the compressor at the blower building. They have been measuring the wells manually. An electronic transducer has been ordered and will be placed in wells 3 and 6. Meters have been placed on the lift stations to monitor the inflows/outflows. Currently there is one holding cell that is 3/4<sup>th</sup> full since last fall. Duke is waiting for a response from a vendor out of Belgrade to purchase a gas meter and rescue tripod. Rahn Abbott asked if the company held confined space training that some of the fire crew would be interested in attending. Mayor Stump will find out.

**Clerk Treasurer** – The audit has been completed and Morgan Scar will be on the call later to discuss the findings.

## **Boards and Committees**

**MSIT** – None

**Park Board District** – Eileen talked about the issues the pool is continuing to have with the boiler. They have been unable to find a plumber available. Ed Smathers volunteered to take a look at it. They are also looking at a replacement cost.

**Fire Station Committee** – Has not held a meeting.

**Public Comment on the Agenda** – None

## **New Business**

### **1. Morgan Scar with Amataic CPA Group to report on the Annual Audit**

Morgan Scar phoned in to report on the audit for fiscal year 2021. The Auditor's report was clean or unmodified. The town did not have expenditures over \$750,000 of federal awards, therefore a single audit was not required. We received 2 deficiencies, similar to previous years. Adequate segregation of duties and appropriately identifying and capitalizing capital assets. There was also one compliance finding. According to MCA 17-2-302, a local government may not maintain a cash balance in a charge for service fund greater than twice the fund's appropriation. The Town's sewer fund maintained a cash balance greater than twice the fund's appropriation. Morgan explained that this issue may prevent the town from getting federal funding if needed. Mike Walter mentioned wanting to hold onto the money in case an emergency takes place, and then not needing to obtain additional loans. No further questions. Tammy Todd moves to approve the audit report. Z. Wade Hampton seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** Rahn Abbott voting yes, Tammy Todd voting yes, Z. Wade Hampton voting yes and Mike Walter voting yes. The motion passes.

### **2. Pledged Securities**

Mayor Stump read the analysis of the pledged securities as of December 31, 2021, to find that there are sufficient amount of pledged securities to the Town of Sheridan. No questions were asked. Rahn Abbott made a motion to approve the Pledged Securities as reported. Tammy Todd seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** Rahn Abbott voting yes, Tammy Todd voting yes, Mike Walter voting yes and Z. Wade Hampton voting yes. The motion passes.

### **3. Proposal from Clearview Tower Company**

Clearview Tower Company III, LLC is offering to purchase from the Town of Sheridan its existing ground lease with American Tower Company near the dump site. Clearview will pay a one-time lump sum fee of \$167,000. Clearview will enter into a 50-year exclusive easement for the ground space. The town has received numerous offers in the past. American Towers currently pays the town \$8,694.55 annually. The council discussed the 50- year term and would like to have a conversation with Bill Ray prior to deciding on selling the ground lease with American Tower Company. Mike Walter moves to TABLE the offer. Z. Wade Hampton seconded the. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** Rahn Abbott voting yes, Tammy Todd voting yes, Mike Walter voting yes and Z. Wade Hampton voting yes. The motion passes.

## **Consent Agenda Items**

The minutes from January 11<sup>th</sup>, were reviewed, no comments. Rahn Abbott moves to approve the meeting minutes for January 11<sup>th</sup>. Tammy Todd seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** Z. Wade Hampton voting yes, Rahn Abbott voting yes, Tammy Todd voting yes and Mike Walter voting. The minutes were approved.

The financial and utility delinquent reports were explained and discussed. Rahn Abbott moves to approve the financial and utility delinquent reports. Mike Walter seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** The motion passed unanimously.

### **Council Report**

Mike Walter spoke about the proposed subdivision, and it is something that he is getting a lot of comment on. This is all new to us and we want to make the right decisions for the community. He would like to invite April Gerth back to talk more on zoning. Mayor Stump is also interested annexation and subdivision rules and city court. Mike Walter also talked about the need for volunteers for the fire department.

### **Mayor's Report**

Nothing more to report.

Mike Walter moves to adjourn tonight's meeting. Tammy Todd seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourned 7:43 p.m.

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Approved: Mayor Robert C. Stump

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Attested: Clerk Ginger Galiger

**From:** P. Wang <pkaygrier@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 11, 2022 4:21 PM  
**To:** sheridan@3rivers.net; rnw@richardwangbroker.com  
**Subject:** Please share with each council member

Dear Sheridan City Council Members:

Richard and I love Sheridan, and we love the way we have been welcomed to the community. We both thank you for your dedication to Sheridan and to keeping it a wonderful place to call home.

When we moved here, we made a pact to find out what Sheridan needs, and work on helping to meet those needs. We soon found out that the most important need for Sheridan was affordable housing for its young people, as well as high quality labor.

This week, sadly, I had to say goodbye to a fantastic employee, as well as a highly promising, potential one. Haylie and her boyfriend moved here from North Carolina. Both young, they were energetic, ready to learn, and hopeful to find a place to call Sheridan their forever home. Keaton found a job with JD Construction, and Haylie found a part time job with me, learning to work on old houses and learning to work in a commercial kitchen. Keaton soon proved his worth to his employer, and given a promise a raise in the near future. Haylie was learning to manage paint brushes, power tools, commercial dishwashers, arrange flowers, and she was slated to start learning how to manage my ebay and etsy shops.

Haylie called me from Miles City on Tuesday, telling me that they had left Sheridan because they felt there was no hope in them finding an acceptable, private rental.

It broke my heart. Not just because I lost a good helper, but because they are exactly what Sheridan needs.

Haylie and Keaton are only two of the young people with this problem. There are many more. Most we don't hear about.

Now, let's jump to another topic.

Sheridan has at least two developments on the table; one is a 42 unit development and the other is something less. I know little of these two developments. However, the one thing I do know is that neither of them will offer the type of housing that Haylie and Keaton would have needed to stay, that is, cheap and decent. They are kids. Hardworking. Honest. Willing to go the extra mile and willing to learn, but without a lot of money. They are, in other words, exact what Sheridan needs. They cannot afford to purchase right now, but they were willing to work to earn a decent living situation.

Apparently, Sheridan seemed to be "too precious" to keep them.

My concern is this; should we choose to allow housing that excludes those who will build the new Sheridan, then who will build the new Sheridan?

Please, please reconsider your support for developments that do not include those who would build those developments. Please consider ensuring housing for those who would add to the quality of life of a working community.

Thank you.

Patricia Wang

February 14, 2022

Town of Sheridan  
Town Council

RE: Crossings Subdivision

I am very concerned about the impact on the residents of Sheridan by the proposed Crossings Subdivision.

Why do people want to live in Sheridan?

- Quality of life. This has been the number one thing that residents have stated in the growth planning. Friendly, courteous, helpful people who care about the life style that Sheridan provides. People helping their neighbors not a place where people are competing for the same limited resources.
- Low crime rate, safety of our citizens
- Conveniences available without long wait time, hospital, doctors, dentist, gas station, grocery store, post office, etc.
- Low traffic congestion
- Peaceful existence

With this proposed subdivision all of that would substantially change. Adding 60 living units to the town could equate to 180+ people. (based on 2 bedrooms per unit)  
How does this town with a population of around 700 support a significant increase of 25% from just this development?

I would like to ask the Mayor and council members to explain how they think this development will be beneficial to the residents of Sheridan? Is not the job of the Mayor and council to protect the town, safety of residents, and life style they want? Will this improve our quality of life? Will we still feel safe? Will we still enjoy the lack of congestion on traffic and our resources?

The residents of Sheridan would need to see a proposed plan for the additional staff that will be required to support this growth from all areas that would be impacted by this development. Where does the funding for this come from?

In reviewing the census data from last year the median age of residents is 57+. This means the 50% of the population is over 57+ years old. How many of these homes are going to be turning over in the next few years? The occupancy rate would be increased in many of these homes from that of the current owners. This needs to be calculated into our water, sewer, and other resources.

I believe building a growth plan on the enhancement of existing assets and paying attention to the community aesthetics are critical to maintain the desired quality of life that the residents currently want to maintain. Are these factors taken into consideration?

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The addition of the number of people that this development will bring will greatly impact our current water and sewer systems. The contracted engineering firm has stated that these systems have PLENTY of room for expansion. First of all, I do not believe that PLENTY is an engineering term. If we have Plenty why are we on water restrictions?

As for the sewer system it was implemented to be good though 2032 for a population of 701, per council minutes. I am not an expert on town wastewater systems but I believe the systems are measured for the number of bedroom per house for the amount of people that a system will support per EPA guidelines (#bedrooms x 2 people per bedroom x gallons per day (gpd) per person). The engineering firm talks a great deal about flows but flows are a snapshot of a specific time frame which would not take into consideration the number of people who are on the systems. Also how are all the commercial facilities counted towards usage? We have hospitals, schools, assisted living , motels, hotels, restaurants, bars, stores, doctors, dentist, brewery, gas station, churches etc. What happens when our sewer systems won't meet the demand? Sewer restriction?

I understand the Town council is hiring another engineering firm to review the capacities of the water and sewer system. What is their methodology for reviewing a current system? How are they addressing the leaking issues that have been reported in council minutes and previous engineering reports to calculate correct sewer capacity? How is this firm being paid? How much have we already paid the previous engineers? How are these firms being held accountable for their finding? Do we have any recourse if they are wrong?

Also, as to the Developer of this development what are his credentials?

Can Sheridan assimilate a growth of 25% produced by one development? If we have capacity to add homes to the water and sewer systems is it fair for one development take up all capacity of water and sewer resources. The sewer financing goes for 10 more years.

We can not be ignorant or complacent of the impact this size of a development will have on the residents of Sheridan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

C. Mauseth  
P.O. Box 271  
Sheridan, MT 59749

NOTE: I used 3 people per two bedroom home assuming all units will have 2 bedrooms to obtain the 180+ number. EPA suggests 2 people per bedroom for calculation. What is the gpd per person amount that is being used to calculate sewer capacity?